(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

Consumption of Gold in the country

†2103. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the year-wise consumption of gold assessed in the country;

(b) the quantity of gold produced in the country to meet the requirement last year and quantity imported during last three years;

(c) the details of the measures taken to increase the production of gold; and

(d) the details of the measures taken to reduce the gap between demand and supply of gold?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) There are no firm estimates of usage of gold in the country. However very rough estimates suggest that usage of gold in India is about 600 tonnes per annum.

(b) The total indigenous production of gold including recovery as by product during 2001-02 was 10,251 Kg. The quantity of gold imported during the last three years is given below in the following table:

(In tonnes)

Year	
1999-2000	558.91
2000-2001	583.72
2001-2002	488.358

(c) The possibility of increasing the production of gold from the existing mines of gold depends on the economic feasibility of ores contained in the mines. Reconnaissance Permits/Prospecting Licences have been granted for exploration of gold which may result in find of new gold deposits and eventual extraction of gold from the ore.

(d) Government has been adopting a liberal import policy for gold with a view to reducing the gap between demand and supply of gold. The import of gold is allowed under Non Resident Indian and free baggage schemes.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.